Image formats

Any image is either a raster or a vector and it's the vectors that work better for logos and illustrations. Images such as digital photos are a combination of dots or 'pixels'. Images made up of pixels are also known as raster images.

Raster images

Raster images are resolution dependent. High resolution raster images must contain a large number of pixels. This is the problem with trying to enlarge web graphics—they are already very low in quality and are made up of only a small number of pixels. Enlarging pixels just gives bigger pixels—which results in jagged and fuzzy images.

Resolution

Resolution is the fineness of detail of an image. In computer terms, resolution is related to the number of or density of pixels used to reproduce a digital image. Computer resolution is measured in dots-per-inch (dpi). For publishing, images for web work can be very low (72–96 dpi) but they need to be much higher for offset printing and signage (240–300 dpi). Web images are unlikely to be useful for publishing in print.

Vector images

Vectors are mathematical 'plots' and are therefore fully scalable since there are no pixels in the image. They are resolution independent making them the industry preferred format for publishing a logo.

EPS (Encapsulated PostScript) files that are created in programs like Adobe® Illustrator and Corel Draw use vector images. EPSs are cross-platform and recognised by all major publishing and illustration packages. An EPS can also be used by other industries (such as signwriting) who work with different computer systems and software.

Acrobat pdf files carrying vector imagery are also useful as an interchange format. Vector pdf files are a suitable format for logos providing they contain no pixel images.